

For immediate release  
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### **Rapid Response Team activated to aid University of Missouri Health Sciences Center employees**

COLUMBIA, Mo. -- The state Rapid Response Team has been activated to help workers that will be dislocated by layoffs at University of Missouri Health Sciences Center, affecting Columbia Regional Hospital, Ellis Fischel Cancer Center and University Hospital and Clinics in Columbia, Mo.

The Rapid Response Team, composed of representatives from the Department of Economic Development's (DED) Division of Workforce Development (DWD), the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and the Central Workforce Investment Board (WIB), responds to the needs of workers who have lost or will lose their jobs by providing special training and re-employment services.

Joseph L. Driskill, director of the Department of Economic Development, has directed DWD to assist University of Missouri Health Sciences Center employees by offering Missouri Career Center services.

"I would like to encourage individuals facing the loss of their job to take advantage of the many free services offered at their local Missouri Career Center," said DED Director Joseph L. Driskill. "The state offers services like Missouri WORKS! or career counseling to help displaced workers locate employment opportunities and become employed again."

The Rapid Response Team and the local Missouri Career Center will provide immediate services to workers needing assistance, including assessment and testing, career counseling and resume writing, interviewing skills, job search methods, on-the-job training and tuition assistance for vocational training or education.

Representatives from DWD and the Central WIB are working with the company to ensure that workers have access to these free services. **A meeting will be held with workers at 2 p.m. today, Nov. 30, at University of Missouri Health Sciences Center at 1 Hospital Drive in Columbia to explain how these services can help them find a new job.** Another meeting was held at 8 a.m. this morning.

University of Missouri Health Sciences Center has decided to downsize its operations in accordance with fiscal projections. As a result, approximately 60 employees total, including security, housekeeping and food service personnel, will be laid off Friday, December 1, from Columbia Regional Hospital, Ellis Fischel Cancer Center and University Hospital and Clinics.

"While layoffs are a natural part of the economic cycle, we know that many employers in the state are in need of quality workers," Driskill added. "With Boone County's unemployment rate hovering around a very low 1 percent for quite some time, conditions are good for these displaced workers to find new comparable jobs, and we encourage employers that have positions available to consider hiring these individuals."

Since 1983 -- when Missouri's dislocated worker program was established -- more than 100,000 dislocated workers have participated in the program. Approximately 80 percent of the people assisted by the program find new employment.

Laid-off workers interested in training and re-employment services offered through the Rapid Response Team, or employers interested in hiring University of Missouri Health Sciences Center workers, can call **DWD at 1-800-877-8698 or the Central Workforce Investment Board at 573/364-7030.**



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